



CITY COUNCIL

Administrative Oversight and Land Use Committee

Monday, December 15, 2008
Meeting Report

Attendance: S. Marmarou, J. Waltman, M. Baez

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 pm by S. Marmarou, Chair.

I. Interviews

Carmela Boykins (appointment – City Diversity Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned how Ms. Boykins became aware of this board. Ms. Boykins indicated that she responded to the ad in the newspaper.

Mr. Waltman informed Ms. Boykins that this board was created by Council to continue working after the court mandated Police Diversity Board and Fire Diversity Board no longer exist.

Mr. Waltman questioned why Ms. Boykins was interested in this board. Ms. Boykins sees a need to educate youth and for youth to know that they have many opportunities. She stated that she does not feel that youth have a commitment to their community.

Mr. Waltman noted the important work of this board. He noted the need to increase education. He noted the need of members of this board not to be involved in politics and to remove the obstacles to diversity.

Ms. Boykins questioned the charge of this board. Mr. Waltman noted that this is a newly created board and that the charge will be the board's decision. Ms. Boykins noted her happiness that this is a new board and that she will be entering on the ground floor. She noted her hope to inspire youth.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed to recommend the appointment of Ms. Boykins to the City Diversity Board.

Jeffrey Gattone (appointment – Zoning Hearing Board)

Mr. Gattone indicated that he watches many meetings on television and felt it was time for him to get involved.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why he was interested in becoming involved with the City. Mr. Gattone noted that he was born and raised in Reading. He noted his love of the City and his professional background. He noted his need to learn about zoning but indicated that he will work within the framework of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Waltman questioned if he would be comfortable making difficult decisions. Mr. Gattone noted that he was.

Mr. Waltman noted the importance of this board.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed to recommend the appointment of Mr. Gattone to the Zoning Hearing Board.

James Schlegel (appointment – BARTA)

Mr. Waltman noted that municipal transportation is at a crossroads. He noted comments by Dennis Louwerse of the need for a more regional approach to public transportation.

Mr. Schlegel informed the Committee of his decision not to own a car and to use public transportation. He noted his use of buses daily. He noted the increased ridership and that many times his bus is standing room only. He noted the problems riders have with boarding buses as the machine to accept bills cause lines to move slowly. He also noted the wear that is already showing at the new transportation center and noted his hope that a better job could be done with maintenance.

Mr. Schlegel noted his good customer service skills. He noted that his route (with the addition of Target) is having problems staying on time. He also noted the need for better advertising of availability and times.

Mr. Marmarou and Mr. Waltman noted that new ideas and perspectives are always helpful.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed to recommend the appointment of Mr. Schlegel to BARTA.

Mary Alamo (appointment – City Diversity Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned if her block of Logan Ave was inside the City limits. Ms. Alamo indicated that it was the last block inside City limits.

Mr. Waltman noted his hope that this board would improve the diversity of the three City workforces. He noted the need of this board to not become political and the City's hope that this board will replace the two court mandated boards – Police Diversity and Fire Diversity boards.

Ms. Alamo questioned if this was a new board. Mr. Waltman indicated that it was. Ms. Alamo was excited to be one of the inaugural members of the board.

Ms. Alamo described problems her husband (a firefighter in New York) encountered after their move to Reading regarding employment by the fire department. She noted communication problems. She also noted the political issues with the fire department in New York and their unwillingness to be open to new ideas.

Mr. Waltman noted his hope that this board would remove obstacles and increase the desire of City residents to work in public service. Ms. Alamo noted the need for residents to feel part of their community and to be involved.

The Administrative Oversight Committee agreed to recommend the appointment of Ms. Alamo to the City Diversity Board.

II. City-wide Diversity Board ad hoc committee

Ms. Katzenmoyer noted that two more members are needed for this board to become functional. Ms. Baez noted her willingness to recruit members.

The Administrative Oversight Committee adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk